

**The Bill Blackwood
Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas**

**Line Employee Affirmative Participation (LEAP) in Leadership
Management Style in Texas State Public Safety Agencies**

**A Leadership White Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Required for Graduation from the
Leadership Command College**

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ABSTRACT

The Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) is currently focusing on changing its management style to a “Bottom-up” direction. This management style has proven effective in the private sector and in local government operations, including law enforcement and public safety agencies. Recent directives by the Texas Legislature Sunset Review Commission (SRC) have pointed to the success of the changes made by the TABC as a guideline for changes at other Texas state public safety agencies. The position of this paper is that Texas state public safety agencies should transition to a Line Employee Affirmative Participation (LEAP) in leadership style of management to increase effectiveness. The literature referenced and research conducted to produce the paper sought to illustrate that LEAP in leadership management would work effectively in a state government context, even in a state as large and diverse as Texas and in public safety agencies (regulatory and enforcement) that traditionally followed a paramilitary style traditional management model (linear, top-to-bottom, chain-of-command management direction).

The primary mission of the TABC, Texas Department of Public Safety (TDPS), Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) Investigations Division is public safety as well as the references and research indicated that the mission of each organization would be enhanced under LEAP in leadership management, which includes input and participation in decision-making by line-level employees who actually perform the daily tasks of each organization and which invests in employee development, retention, succession planning, motivation, and dedication through shared responsibility.

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INTRODUCTION

The traditional management model is not as effective as it once was in Texas state public safety organizations. As society transitions into the twenty-first century, the perceptions of and expectations for public safety agencies at the state level are evolving. In order to keep pace with these changes and to better match the expectations of citizens and employees, management staff must lead the way. Line Employee Affirmative Participation (LEAP) in leadership management integrates input and shared responsibility from people who actually perform line-level duties. With participation comes buy-in: “people tend to support what they help to create” (Elias, 2006, p. 2). The traditional management model is linear, top to bottom, management down to employees, with little feedback returning up the chain of command. LEAP in leadership management pushes decision-making responsibility as low as possible within the organizational table, which means better decisions, since those closest to problems are often best suited to solve them (Abrashoff, 2002). The time saved frees up management to consider and resolve issues within the big picture perspective (Abrashoff, 2008).

Under the LEAP in leadership management style, managers still provide guidance and are still accountable for the actions of their teams; however, they allow people do their jobs, and they ensure that their team members learn to do the next level of work, or succession planning (Kotter, 1996). Leadership is the key component to LEAP in leadership management, with the difference between leadership and management understood as the following: leadership is the art of guiding people, and management is the science of allocating resources, a concept stated similarly by Maxwell (1999). Effective leaders value the contributions of each employee, and

employees who feel valued, informed, and who are part of solutions to problems perform more effectively and with a more positive outlook (Kotter, 1996).

Portions of the opposing view, the traditional management model, can be incorporated into the LEAP in leadership management style. There is still a structured organization, and management staff cannot abrogate their responsibilities, but rather they can share the risks and accountability of decision-making. Management staff are still encouraged to pursue excellence and expertise; the difference is that they would no longer be expected to be the subject matter expert in all areas.

A change to the LEAP in leadership management style will assist in recruiting and retaining high quality employees in a shrinking pool of interested applicants. Employees benefit by having a genuine impact on their own environments (Abrashoff, 2002). The organization benefits through increased efficiency and morale. External customers face better trained and educated employees who know how to help and are willing to do so. Respected employees tend to treat others with courtesy and to perform their duties with a sense of service (Maxwell, 1999). In order to experience commensurate success with that enjoyed by the TABC, Texas state public safety agencies should transition to a LEAP in leadership management style to increase effectiveness, employee retention and job satisfaction, and customer satisfaction.

COUNTER POSITION

The traditional management model is in place because it has been effective throughout the twentieth century. Kotter (1996) stated, "In the twentieth century, the development of business professionals in the classroom and on the job focused on

management-that is, people were taught how to plan, budget, organize, staff, control, and problem solve” (p. 166). Employees entering the workforce must be trained to “fit the mold” set in place by the organizational culture (Server, 2008). Employees must be taught to value the traditions set in place by their predecessors and by professional management personnel. Management Icon Peter F. Drucker (2008) stated:

During the years since the 1930s, every developed country has become a society of institutions. Every major social task - whether economic performance or health care, education or the protection of the environment, the pursuit of new knowledge or defense – is today being entrusted to organizations, designed for long life and managed by their own managements. *On the performance of these institutions, the performance of modern society – if not the very survival of its members – increasingly depends. The performance and survival of the institution depend on the performance of management.* (p. 134)

The focus on professional management should directly benefit line level employees. With professional, caring managers in place, employees can be more effectively guided in their endeavors. Training budgets are limited, so the focus should be directed first at management and then toward technical training for employees. Properly trained managers can solve most problems in the workplace and should be able to answer most customer questions or issues, thus allowing line employees to focus on their individual or team tasks (Drucker, 2008). A frequently recommended resource for managers is *The One Minute Manager* (Blanchard & Johnson, 1982). The book focuses on three major areas: goal-setting, praising performance, and reprimanding performance. It is simple and direct and has been considered a standard in the business world since it was first published. One of the inside cover endorsements comes from David C. Jones, General, U.S.A.F., Retired, Former Chairman, the Joint Chiefs of Staff: “In government, criticizing performance has become the dominant management technique...”

General Jones was quite familiar with the traditional management model, which has a rigid chain-of command structure. The chain worked both ways, with information flowing up and down from management and down to employees, with feedback being measured in results and statistics. Abrashoff (2002) reiterated the rigid chain of command structure in his descriptions of U.S. Navy operations. In his later work, Abrashoff (2008) expanded the descriptions to tradition based business organizations. The emphasis in the military was on creating uniformity while discouraging diversity of thought and action. This is appropriate and necessary in an environment where instant obedience and reflexes can mean life or death in a combat situation and a certain type of figurative or economical death in the business community.

Since law enforcement agencies have traditionally been organized along paramilitary lines, the similarities in management styles were perhaps inevitable. After World War II, many former soldiers gravitated toward law enforcement. This trend continued throughout the twentieth century. Many agencies allow applicants to substitute military service for college hour requirements, which results in large numbers of prior service recruits in law enforcement academies. The military influence ensures that new officers possess discipline and a sense of service. These qualities tend to be highly valued among current management at many law enforcement agencies. In a state the size of Texas, it is difficult to maintain consistency among offices throughout the state, so authoritarian management with a clear chain of command possesses some appeal. Sharing leadership and accountability presents greater risks and challenges: it also produces greater long-term returns in employee performance and development (Abrashoff, 2008). Even the military has recognized that people have a need to grow and to be an integral part of their organizations rather than mere “cogs in the machine”

(U.S. Army, 2006). Byham and Cox (1988) listed examples of what “Sapps” (the opposite of “Zapp”, or empowerment) people:

Confusion; lack of trust; not being listened to; no time to solve problems; bureaucratic office politics; someone solving problems for you; no time to work on bigger issues; not knowing whether you are succeeding; across-the-board rules and regulations; a boss taking credit for other’s ideas; not enough resources to do the job well; believing that you can’t make a difference; a job simplified to the point that it has no meaning; and people treated exactly the same, like interchangeable parts. (p. 51)

The examples of sapping behavior by management stem from the traditional management model. In the traditional management model, management staff alone create and possess the plan of action, and employees tend to be confused and become mistrustful of management motives. When only management staff are considered subject matter experts, there is no need to listen to line level employees. The pressures of time created by results-oriented management in the traditional model prevent or interfere with quality considerations, even when both employees and management would prefer to produce higher quality results. Bureaucratic levels and systems create distance and barriers to communication between line level employees and management in both directions on the traditional chain-of-command. The need to ask for a supervisor rather than making an informed decision delays progress and creates resentment among employees who are closest to the issues. A lack of feedback about performance, either praise or reprimand, keeps people from improving and allows them to repeat mistakes and to quit striving for excellence. Under the traditional management model, people are all treated the same in the interest of fairness or in the fear of civil action. All rules apply to all employees in the same way and at all times, regardless of whether they cover the entire realm of possibilities. Procedures are put in place by management with no input from the people who actually do the work. Any deviation

from the rules is met with disciplinary procedures. When employees no longer believe that they can make a difference, they will do no more than necessary to keep from being disciplined or fired (Byham & Cox, 1988).

In a profession like law enforcement, which is seeing a decrease in the number of applicants and line level employees who wish to make law enforcement their career, management must evolve. Managers must also be leaders and must develop leadership traits and abilities in all employees. Peace officers already possess or are trained to assertiveness. They are trained to help people and to guide or coach them back to rational thinking. These are leadership techniques, and since even the newest officer is trained to lead in the community, it is natural that they possess leadership qualities and should be managed as leaders. Blanchard (2000), along with other contributors expanded on his *One Minute Manager* concept, to include a work with Carew and Parisi-Carew (2000). Blanchard, Carew and Parisi-Carew (2000) apparently saw the flaw in the original work, "...the concepts of One Minute Management are based too much on control. The manager sets the goals, the manager gives praises and the manager delivers reprimands" (p. 1). Blanchard and his coauthors recognized that there was a need to expand beyond preparing only the manager for a leadership role.

POSITION

In order to understand the change process regarding management style, it is first necessary to understand the concepts of traditional management and LEAP in leadership management. Traditional management is often considered in simple terms such as authoritarian or linear (top to bottom, management down to line employees).

Bacal (2008) described traditional management using the following summary of the concept:

There is no question that government is arranged in a hierarchical structure, with decision-making, accountability and responsibility vested first in the senior executive, and then distributed down the line to other executives or managers... The process is indeed hierarchical and traditional, moving from top to bottom. The bottom line is that, structurally, the Minister, and senior executives are ultimately responsible for what occurs in their bailiwicks... since senior officials are held responsible, it is in their own self-interest to be involved in decision-making that may ultimately come back to haunt them, and to use their organizational power to satisfy their own needs and those of people at the top of the traditional pyramid. (p. 1)

While the description was couched in vernacular terms, the concepts were clear. The emphasis was on the manager's perspective since, in the traditional management Model, all significant decisions were made solely by management with little or no input from line staff or first-line supervisors. Under the traditional management model, managers were perceived as the experts and line employees who approached their duties with the attitude of, "I'll do whatever you tell me to do (no more, no less)" were valued. Managing meant taking care of the company while focusing on production and outcome measures, or the bottom-line, with no real emphasis on employee performance, input, accountability, or development (Abrashoff, 2008).

For many years, the emphasis on management skills, the ingredient essential to traditional management, prevailed over that of leadership qualities (Maxwell, 1999). Also key to LEAP in leadership management are the concepts of input by line-level employees and buy-in. Those who help to create a procedure are more likely to support it. Leadership qualities are concerned with influencing behavior to achieve goals while focusing on individual and team performance and development.

The traditional management model was especially prevalent in government agencies and the focus was on results based on statistics. However, the trend has begun to reverse to some degree with the recognition that employees who are valued will perform actual services, even without the pressure of producing statistics or quotas (Abrashoff, 2008). The United States Army is a traditional organization, and due to the potential for combat missions, there is a need for a degree of authoritarian management and employee obedience. However, in general terms, there has been an evolution in the approach to leadership and management as illustrated in the U. S. Army 6-22 Leadership Guide, which defined leadership in Army terms as:

An **Army leader** is anyone who by virtue of assumed role or assigned responsibility inspires and influences people to accomplish organizational goals. Army leaders motivate people both inside and outside the chain of command to pursue actions, focus thinking, and shape decisions for the greater good of the organization. (p. 1)

The emphasis was still on the organization and organizational goals but the development of leaders and subordinates was also included in the definition. This reflected the understanding that there was a need for balance between the concepts of management and leadership. Blanchard (1982) made the observation, “If you want to know why your people are not performing well, step up to the mirror and take a peek” (p. 52). This statement leads to the realm of what methods are most effective and what relative weight should be given to management objectives and leadership principles. Covey (1990) highlighted and compared the concepts of leadership and management in a Chapter titled “Habit 2 [of 7] Begin with the End in Mind” and a subchapter titled “Leadership and Management – The Two Creations.” In his summary of the chapter, Covey (1990) highlighted the subjects of individual leadership and vision:

Management is a bottom line focus: How can I best accomplish certain things? Leadership deals with the top line: What are the things I want to accomplish? ... Management is efficiency in climbing the ladder of success; leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall. (p. 101)

LEAP in leadership management includes aspects of both management and leadership. Abrashoff (2002) examined LEAP in leadership management based on his experiences as Captain of the *USS Benfold* to illustrate the effectiveness of LEAP in leadership management in a traditionally-based, large-scale government agency: the United States Navy. The skills examined in Abrashoff's (2002) summary provide a basic template to describe LEAP in leadership management:

Take Command; Lead by Example; Listen Aggressively; Communicate Purpose and Meaning; Create a Climate of Trust; Look for Results, Not Salutes; Take Calculated Risks; Go Beyond Standard Procedures; Build Up Your People; Generate Unity; and Improve Your People's Quality of Life. (p. 201)

Kotter (1996) stated,

By any objective measure, the amount of significant, often traumatic, change in organizations has grown tremendously over the past two decades... As a result, more and more organizations will be pushed to reduce costs, improve the quality of products and services, locate new opportunities for growth, and increase productivity. (p. 3)

These reasons for change are paralleled in the requirements set forth by the Texas Legislature Sunset Review Commission (SRC) and the direction of the executive staff of the TABC. The SRC requirements set forth a series of goals and the executive staff determined the methods by which the TABC would pursue those goals. Success was dependant on the ability to conduct a change process in how the TABC operated, top to bottom.

Kotter's book, *Leading Change* (1996), was employed as a guide to how the TABC would conduct its change process. The text illustrates eight problems that face

various agencies that are in need of change. It then proceeds to put forth an “Eight-Stage Process” by which successful change may be achieved and maintained. The eight problems and eight solutions are then paralleled in the text. The stages include establishing a sense of urgency, the catalyst for change, and creating a guiding coalition to lead the development of the sections of the change areas. Other areas include developing a vision and strategy and communicating the change vision so that all employees can understand the new direction and goals. Also considered essential to the change process is empowering employees for broad-based action by pushing the power of decision-making as low as possible within the organizational table, generating short-term wins to maintain momentum, consolidating gains and producing more change, and, finally, anchoring new approaches in the culture. The final portion of the book expressed the need for continuous personal and professional development and highlighted that employee types are evolving.

Abrashoff (2002) paralleled the last portion of *Leading Change* as illustrated in his description of his transition period as a new ship’s commander: “However the economy is doing, a challenge for leaders in the twenty-first century is attracting and retaining ... the best employees...The timeless Challenge in the real world is to help less-talented people transcend their limitations” (p. 12). Many organizations, to include the state of Texas, use exit surveys to determine why employees leave the organization. The top five reasons listed included similar concerns to the sapping behaviors mentioned above. The most frequent reason was being treated with a lack of respect or dignity. The second reason was that the employees believed that they had limited or no impact on the organization. The third reason was that management did not listen to employees, no matter how apparent the employees’ logic might have been.

The fourth reason was that employees were not rewarded with more responsibility, regardless of their accomplishments. Low pay was relegated to the fifth reason, despite the view of many managers that pay is the top motivator for employees.

With all indicators pointing in the same direction, the TABC Executive Staff had little choice but to institute the changes required by the SRC and to do so according to a clear and consistent plan. While the plan was initially developed based on research by management, the management team quickly began to employ the resources of employees at all levels and in all divisions (TABC, 2009-2013, Strategic Plan). In 2009, the SRC set forth similar guidelines for the TDPS and TPWD and used the success of the TABC in implementing its plan as a template for the other state agencies to follow (Sunset Review Commission, 2009).

Kotter (1996) emphasized that a sense of urgency is required in order to initiate change:

By far the biggest mistake people make when trying to change organizations is to plunge ahead without establishing a high enough sense of urgency in fellow managers and employees. This error is fatal because transformations always fail to achieve their objectives when complacency levels are too high. (p. 4)

The initial sense of urgency came when the SRC began its review of whether the TABC would continue as a cohesive agency or have its functions divided among other agencies. There was no serious effort to eliminate the agency, but there were serious concerns raised by legislators, the alcoholic beverage industry, and the public. The main impetus that drove the change was the recommendation by the SRC that the TABC shift its regulatory and enforcement efforts toward a combined public safety mission for the entire organization. The overall report emphasized accountability and

consistency in responses such as a centralized response to marketing practices inquiries.

One of the initial efforts was the Sales to Intoxicated People Sting (SIPS) program. The effort ultimately failed because there was no input and therefore no buy-in from line-level employees in the field offices who had to implement the program. The program was based on statistics, and there was a push to produce statistical results rather than to achieve the goal of public safety. The details of the program were explained to field staff only after a crisis occurred. The program was designed around organizational silos so that internally and externally, there was no concerted effort to accomplish the goal of the program: to reduce fatalities caused by intoxication offenses (Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission's Sales to Intoxicated Persons: Hearing before the Senate Committee on Criminal Justice, 2006).

The entire list of problems was illustrative of the need for change in operations and, more importantly, in how the TABC was led. The traditional management model created obstacles that led to the problems listed by the state senate committee: a handful of management experts, who were resistant to change, made all significant decisions; the approach was based on a traditional statistics-driven method rather than being goal oriented; there was no communication to those who had to do the actual work, much less the means or opportunity to provide any input on how to do it; and there was no cooperation between the disparate groups who should have worked as a team (e.g. TABC enforcement, regulatory, and licensing divisions, the local prosecutors, local and federal public safety and regulatory agencies, the alcoholic beverage industry, and the public and public organizations). The situation created a management crisis, which became a major catalyst for change.

Since the senate committee hearing in 2006, the TABC executive staff implemented a change program, and one of the first acts was to create a “Guiding Coalition” to direct the change. The membership has remained flexible where needed, but there is a strong core membership (Kotter, 1996). Once there was a new direction in place, to be guided by management with the input and empowerment of employees, the silos were breached. For example, the enforcement and regulatory divisions in field offices were combined as field operations (Field Operations Division, 2009). Those employees who absolutely refused to meet the new standards and goals mostly retired. Those who joined did so enthusiastically.

In applying LEAP in leadership management concepts, one of the input and empowerment methods was the “Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission Survey of Organizational Excellence” (2007). This survey was conducted biennially, but there was a change on the last survey. A committee was formed to explore how the input from employees might actually be implemented rather than merely recorded. The *Enforcement Procedures Manual* was developed and vetted by field operations employees. The new fitness standards required by the Texas Legislature in 2007 were implemented by involving as many employees as possible in the process (e.g. fitness coordinators and 100 employees who participated in testing to set standards for the tests). The TABC combined its efforts with those of the TPWD and the TDCJ to coordinate physical agility tests designed for each organization by a contracted vendor (the same vendor used by TDPS in 2006).

At the field level, agents were assigned to develop operations plans and to coordinate enforcement efforts with other public safety entities. Headquarters and executive staff supported field operations efforts to prevent potential problem subjects

from obtaining permits and licenses by assigning licensing, regulatory, and enforcement staff to work together to improve the “Protest” system. Executive staff, including the legal services division, solicited input from case agents to remove the permit or license holders who violated provisions of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code. The silos began to fall, and the organization began to coalesce into a more cohesive entity (Field Operations Division, 2009).

Steen emphasized that LEAP in leadership management actually creates work initially. There are committee meetings that require time to coordinate and plan as well as the research prior to and after meetings and the actual time for the committee meetings. In Texas state government, travel expenses are a major factor, and the travel must be coordinated and requested according to state accounting guidelines. However, the final product is the benefit: the long-term savings that are garnered by a more efficient and motivated workforce (A. Steen, personal communication, April 15, 2008). Abrashoff (2002) illustrated that with the changing workforce that includes members of Generation X and Generation Y, the previous motivation of mere salary was inadequate for those now entering the workforce. These most recent employees were described as more educated and more technically oriented, with the ability to multi-task. Recruiting, training, and mentoring future leaders in a changing world would be the next challenge.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

Traditional management resulted in habits that stemmed from results-oriented pressures (usually obtained as statistics or quotas). These management habits, which were effective in the past, often ignored the means by which they were accomplished

and failed to address actual results. Few people had input on decision-making, and authority was kept within a small group of management elite, thus the talents of line-level employees were ignored and wasted and there was no buy-in for organizational goals. LEAP in leadership management is means oriented with a focus on the quality of decisions and employing the talents of as many team members as possible.

LEAP in leadership management allows for employees to personally prosper and to discover how things work in the professional world. Employees who are valued and who have input on decision-making and planning tend to bring their best efforts to work and to extend those efforts to improving themselves and their quality of life. This leads to commitment to the values of the organization and to fellow team members—all members at all levels and in all assignments. The answer, “I’d contact my supervisor” is no longer considered to be an adequate response to questions asked during hiring and promotional interviews. Management staff are still in charge and still ultimately accountable for results; however, they now share ownership of the organization and its operation with all employees (Abrashoff, 2008).

Better educated peace officers with multilingual skills are the future of Texas law enforcement. Enforcement work at the TABC is tending toward investigative approaches, and public safety functions have been prioritized and emphasized to employees, the alcoholic beverage industry, and to the public. The vision and mission of the TABC has evolved and better reflects trends in the professional world and the general population (see Appendices 1 and 2). As the TDPS implements the changes ordered by the SRC, more field operations positions will become law enforcement oriented as operations such as driver license and weights divisions are transferred to “business-style” operations and enforcement staff are moved to field operations (TDPS

and TPWD Sunset Review Report, 2009).

As the twenty-first century progresses, law enforcement will have to adapt to a shrinking pool of applicants (Abrashoff, 2008). In order to find the best applicants for state public safety agencies, it may be necessary to go back to the roots of law enforcement recruiting—the military. If world conflicts de-escalate, there will be a large number of eager job-seekers who have been performing duties in diverse environments; who have picked up new languages and the ability to learn more; who have overcome great odds and learned loyalty and leadership qualities; and who have the resources to obtain a college education. Many of the traditional management model flaws have been corrected in the military, as with the “warrior” approach to training (Army, 2006).

The best practices in recruitment or any other aspect of operations in Texas state public safety agencies will be developed with input from those who are closest to the challenges. Recruiting, training, and mentoring the leaders of the future will be critical to each of the affected organizations. Each will have to find internal solutions to problems as well as seek aid from others who have already overcome similar obstacles. LEAP in leadership management provides a basic concept from which to spring into action.

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APPENDIX 1

TABC General Standards and Principles

Our Four Cornerstones

Service
Courtesy
Integrity
Accountability

Our Philosophy

The TABC will:

Apply the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code in a fair, consistent, and timely manner;

Exemplify courteous, ethical, and professional behavior;

Be fiscally responsible and accountable to the people of Texas;

Be accessible, transparent, efficient, and effective.

Our Guiding Principles

1. We value our employees, are committed to their continual improvement and empower them to make key decisions.
2. We expect ethical and professional behavior of ourselves.
3. We recruit, train, mentor, and develop individuals who are committed to our vision.
4. We do the right thing, not just what we have the right to do.
5. We exercise discretion in our authority when making decisions based on ethical and legal principles.
6. We know our mission and understand our purpose, and we integrate our efforts in order to accomplish it in a consistent and efficient manner.
7. We work together to achieve goals and solve problems.
8. We strive to put responsible people into business and promote good business practices through integrated partnerships.

Our Mission

The mission of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission is to promote public safety and serve the people of Texas through consistent, fair and timely administration of the Alcoholic Beverage Code while fostering education, voluntary compliance and legal, responsible alcohol consumption.

Our Vision

A safe and responsible Texas served by an Alcoholic Beverage Commission committed to innovative partnerships with our communities and the alcoholic beverage industry.

Appendix 2

TABC Compact with Texans Statement



Dedicated professionals serving citizens in an honest, efficient and friendly way;

If I had to describe the driving philosophy behind our *Compact with Texans*, it would be in this manner: Commitment, Quality, Honesty, Efficiency, and Friendliness. When it comes down to it, these are pretty much universal guiding principles that we all have come to expect of any service provider. We believe you deserve no less from us.

At the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission, we realize the awesome responsibility that the State of Texas has placed upon our agency and we view this *Compact* as a binding agreement between you, our customer, and every member of our agency.

In addition to telling you who we are and what we do, this agreement will also lay out some standards that we will strive hard to measure up to as we carry out our day-to-day responsibilities. So, whether your contact with us is in person, via regular mail, over the telephone, at our web site or through whatever other medium available, we want you to know that our work ethic will be marked with a spirit and zeal to help you out in whatever way possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Alan Steen", is positioned above the printed name.

Alan Steen
Administrator